



Milwaukee County

Supervisor Joe Sanfelippo, 17th District

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MILWAUKEE COUNTY'S MENTAL HEALTH MODEL IS OUTDATED

Supervisor Sanfelippo asks Chairman Holloway to expand scope of audit

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Supervisor Joe Sanfelippo is asking Board Chairman Lee Holloway to expand the scope of an audit being conducted relating to patient safety at Milwaukee County's Mental Health Complex. Chairman Holloway directed that the audit be performed last month.

"I share the Chairman's concerns in making sure that the services provided by the Behavioral Health Division meet the high standards of care that our residents expect and our patients deserve," Supervisor Sanfelippo said. "Milwaukee County has a statutory – and moral – obligation to provide mental health care for those in need."

"In order to meet those obligations, I have sent a letter to Chairman Holloway asking him to expand the scope of this audit to include a study of whether the direct provision of mental health services by Milwaukee County is the most effective way to provide this vital function," Supervisor Sanfelippo explained. "More than half of the ten most populous counties in Wisconsin already contract out for some or all of their mental health needs. A number of them don't operate a mental health hospital at all."

"It's clear to me that the County's model providing direct mental health services to citizens is outdated," Supervisor Sanfelippo added. "Fifteen years ago, Milwaukee County sold Doyne Hospital, effectively discontinuing the direct provision of general health care. Last year, Milwaukee County's General Assistance Medical Program was rolled into the State's BadgerCare Plus Core Plan. Ending the direct provision of mental health services is the next logical continuation of this policy direction," Supervisor Sanfelippo added. "I believe it would provide a higher level of care and at a lower cost to taxpayers."

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